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Felda to implement intelligent plantation tech

FELDA Agricultural Services (FAS) Sdn Bhd will implement an intelligent plantation technology into its 100-ha research plantation area in Pahang by the third quarter of this year.

Among other things, the intelligent technology involves developing a platform based on information, communication and technology for remote and accurate monitoring of soil condition and crop parameters in Felda estates.

This move will see further improvement in crude palm oil production as well as improving plantations management, FAS executive director/

chief executive officer S Palaniappan said.

He told reporters this after the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between FAS and Mimos Bhd on the collaboration for the development of the intelligent plantation technology.

"The first phase will be done at our Pusat Perkhidmatan Pertanian Tun Razak in Sungai Tekam, Pahang. We will likely see the results from the research plantations after 12 months," he said.

Under the MoU, the two parties will collaborate in six areas whereby Mimos will develop new applications for FAS based on its Micro Electro Me-

chanical System (MEMS) sensor technology, semantic technology, wireless technology and grid computing technology platforms.

Palaniappan said these tools would be used to enhance FAS' research and development and advisory services to the Felda Group which oversees some 740,000ha of oil palm plantations.

Currently, FAS has about 12,000ha of land nationwide used specifically for research and development of oil palm plantation, of which the largest is Pusat Perkhidmatan Pertanian Tun Razak with 5,000ha of land.

Besides improving the oil extraction rate for palm oil, the new technology would be also able to produce combination of new breed of seeds as well as aid in decision-making process in plantations management, he said.

Last year, FAS produced around 23 million of seeds, of which 75% was marketed to external clients in Malaysia and Indonesia besides Felda.

FAS, a direct subsidiary of Felda Holdings Bhd, and which specialises in oil palm plant breeding technology, tissue culture, agronomy and crop protection, holds a 28% share in the local seed market. — *Bernama*